



# what's up?

## violence

### INFORMATION FOR ADULTS WHO CARE ABOUT TEENS

#### What's it all about?

Violence affects the lives of many Washington youth and may even result in death. Youth violence may include:

- Carrying and using a weapon
- Dating violence
- Fighting
- Forced sexual intercourse
- Bullying

#### Why does it matter?

In Washington, about 60 youth, 15 to 24 years old, die each year due to homicide, and over 100 due to suicide. The Washington Attorney General released a report entitled "Bruised Inside, What Our Children Say About Youth Violence." It points to home life and harassment as the factors that respondents believed to be key causes of youth violence. The report found that many of the tools for preventing youth violence are in the hands of parents and teens. Many youth who grow up with violence in the home use violence to solve their problems outside the home.

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#### What are the details?

##### In the US:

- By age 12, the average child is estimated to have witnessed 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on network television.
- Nationally, homicide is the second leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds. In this age group, homicide is the leading cause of death for African Americans.
- Guns are a factor in most youth homicides. In 1999, 81% of homicide victims 15 to 24 years old were killed with firearms.
- Violent deaths at school represent less than 1 percent of all homicides and suicides that occur among school-aged children.
- 1-in-8 female high school students reports being raped.

##### In Washington:

- Homicide is the third leading cause of death among youth 10 to 19 years old.
- Male teens 15 to 19 years old are 2 times more likely to die from homicide than females in the same age group.
- According to the 2002 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, nearly 10% of 8th, 10th and 12th graders in Washington said they carried a weapon to school in the past month.
- 1-in-5 8th graders and 1-in-8 10th graders reported that they had been in a physical fight on school property at least once in the past year.
- Younger students are more likely to report being bullied in the past month than older students. For instance, about 30% of 6th graders report being bullied compared to about 15% of 12th graders.
- Nearly 1-in-10 adolescents say they had been hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past year.



## VIOLENCE INFORMATION FOR ADULTS WHO CARE ABOUT TEENS

### Why does it matter? (continued)

Here are some risk factors for youth delinquency and violence:

- Children who have been physically or sexually abused are more likely than other children to become violent teens and adults. Between 15% and 20% of 8th, 10th and 12th graders in Washington report being physically abused by an adult.
- Youth who witness domestic violence are more likely to use violence during their lifetime and are at greater risk for low self-esteem, depression, and substance abuse.
- Parents who are involved in criminal activities or abuse drugs are more likely to have violent teens.
- Bullying and “dissing” are perceived by children, parents, teachers and school administrators as major contributors to youth violence.

#### •Kids who resist violence:

- Received a lot of attention during infancy.
- Grew up with structure and household rules during adolescence.
- Had a close knit family.

#### Adolescents who resist violence:

- Are protected by strong connections with families, schools, friends.
- Are protected because parents are home more frequently at key times of the day.
- Report that teachers treat them fairly, that they feel a part of the school and that other kids are not prejudiced.
- Are taught ways of dealing with conflict that don’t involve violence.
- Are more likely to report that they do not have access to guns.

### What can I do?

Here are some tips adapted from “Lessons from the Experts:”

- Help teens gain skills in self-control, decision-making, problem solving, listening and communication.
- Encourage and promote cultural identity and acceptance of diversity.
- Promote a positive school climate that does not tolerate violence and aggression.
- Pay attention to school bullying. Talk about how to recognize controlling behaviors.
- Negotiate disagreements so that conflicts do not grow larger.
- Be available to listen and discuss needs, concerns and desires.
- Pay attention to what a teen is doing. Ask questions about their relationships in a caring way. Watch for signs of dating violence and mental abuse, such as injuries, control of activities, and isolation from friends or family.
- Let teens know they do not deserve to be treated with violence. Be prepared to intervene by getting assistance.
- Talk about and foster skills on how to respond and be safe when violence occurs.

**hot  
links!**

American Psychological Association [www.apa.org/pi/pii/teen/contents.html](http://www.apa.org/pi/pii/teen/contents.html)  
“Love Doesn’t Have to Hurt Teens”

Partnership Against Violence Network (PAVNET) [www.pavnet.org/](http://www.pavnet.org/)

American Psychological Association <http://helping.apa.org/family/raising.html>  
“Raising Children to Resist Violence: What You Can Do”

Attorneys General of Washington State [www.atg.wa.gov/releases/rel\\_report\\_041000.html](http://www.atg.wa.gov/releases/rel_report_041000.html)  
“Student Perspectives on Causes of Youth Violence” (Press Release, April 10, 2000)

Bruised Inside [www.atg.wa.gov/bruised.html](http://www.atg.wa.gov/bruised.html)

National Adolescent Health Information Center <http://youth.ucsf.edu/nahic/products.html>  
“Youth Violence: Lessons from the Experts”

National Juvenile Justice Information Center 1-800-851-3420;  
<http://virlib.ncjrs.org/JuvenileJustice.asp>

Teens Health [www.teenshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/](http://www.teenshealth.org/teen/your_mind/)  
Information and advice about health, relationships and growing up

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE

WOMENSPACE Domestic Violence Services <http://youth.enddomesticviolence.org/adults/default.asp>  
A place for teens and adults who want to help teens

Washington State Healthy Youth Survey 2002 [www3.doh.wa.gov/HYS/](http://www3.doh.wa.gov/HYS/)

Washington State Department of Health  
DOH Pub 910-122 11/2003  
[www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)

Resources listed here are provided as a public service and do not imply endorsement by the State of Washington.

References for source materials are available from the Child and Adolescent Health program, 360-236-3547.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. Please call 1-800-525-0127.



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# P R I N T I N G   S P E C I F I C A T I O N S

**Title:**    **What's Up? Information for Adults Who Care About Teens  
"Violence" Fact Sheet**

**Size:**    8.5 x 11

**Paper stock:**    80# text white gloss

**Ink color:**    4-color process

**Special instructions:**    2-sided printing with full bleeds

**DOH Pub #:**    910-122